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SURVEY AND ANALYSIS OF

FOUR WORKS FOR WIND BAND

(TITLE)

BY
BRYAN CHESI

THESIS

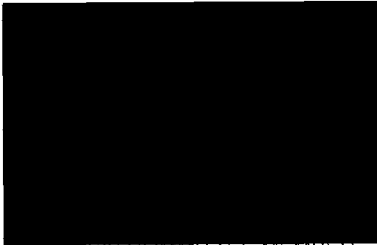
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

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Abstract

Survey and Analysis of Four Works for Wind Band

by

Bryan Chesi

Intended as a resource for band conductors, this essay provides background information, composer biographical information, and salient features of four wind band compositions. The compositions include two works composed for band by award winning composers. Two others are transcriptions and arrangements of works originally composed for orchestra or other mediums. The pieces include *Colorado Peaks* composed by Dana Wilson, *Commando March* composed by Samuel Barber, *Blessed Are They* by Johannes Brahms - Arranged by Barbara Buehlman, and *Spoon River* composed by Percy Grainger - arranged by Glenn Cliffe Bainum. Topics include an examination of flexible scoring and compositional style in Dana Wilson's *Colorado Peaks*, historical context, thematic development, and orchestrational practices in Samuel Barber's *Commando March*, text painting and significance of liturgical text in Brahms's *German Requiem*, as it applies to Barbara Buehlman's arrangement *Blessed Are They*, and comparison of themes and counter themes in Percy Grainger's *Spoon River*.

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Introduction

During my studies over the past two years, I have had the opportunity and privilege to conduct a majority of the instrumental ensembles offered on campus at Eastern Illinois University. These experiences consistently remind me that a thorough knowledge of the piece at hand is essential to bring the composer's intended vision to light. One must possess knowledge of the composers, their background, the piece's historical context, and be able to articulate clearly what is unique about the particular composition, and why. This level of preparation is crucial to making well informed musical decisions which result in a performance that is reflective of the composer's intent.

Within this document are four brief chapters that highlight the unique elements from four compositions I had the opportunity to study, rehearse, and conduct. Following the biographical information on each composer, each chapter has a different focus.

Chapter One focuses on the flexibility of Dana Wilson's composition *Colorado Peaks*. It outlines optional parts and cross cues. It also highlights Dana Wilson's compositional style and his development of main themes within the work.

Chapter Two explores the historical context of Samuel Barber's *Commando March*, his only published work for wind band. It also examines thematic development and some orchestrational differences between this original work for band and the orchestral transcription Barber completed at a later date.

Chapter Three highlights the differences between Barbara Buehlman's arrangement, *Blessed Are They*, and the first movement of Johannes Brahms's original choral/orchestral composition *Ein Deutes Requiem*. It also explores some of the

representative text painting Brahms uses with the bible verses he sets in this work and discusses the historical significance of Brahms's choice of liturgical text.

Chapter Four explores Percy Grainger's variations of the American folk tune melody *Spoon River*. I highlight some of the differences in his early to later settings of the work and focus on development of the main theme and countermelody throughout the work.

Chapter One

Colorado Peaks by Dana Wilson

Dana Wilson was born in Lakewood, Ohio and grew up in Wilton, Connecticut. He studied piano as a child, drawing interest from improvising and “the music of Liszt and other schmaltzy Romantics.” He began playing in jazz groups in sixth grade, and by high school was doing a fair amount of composing and performing. However, at the time he did not plan to pursue music as a career. As he states, “one learned music [where he grew up] as an avocation – to become a Renaissance man – not to become a professional.”¹

Wilson studied psychology and minored in music while studying at Bowdoin College. He took theory and composition courses, directed a vocal octet, and performed in a rock band. Upon completion of his undergraduate degree, Wilson planned to become a lawyer, but was drafted into the United States Army near the end of the Vietnam War. He was stationed in Heidelberg, Germany where he performed in the European Headquarters Band and met and worked with musicians who studied at Julliard and Eastman.²

Upon returning to the United States, Wilson completed a M.A. in composition from The University of Connecticut and a Ph.D. in Music Theory from The Eastman School of Music. While at Eastman he studied composition with Samuel Adler and also

¹ Lois Ferrari, “Two Symphonic Wind Ensemble Compositions of Dana Wilson, *Piece of Mind, Shakata: Singing the World Into Existence*” (DMA Dissertation, Eastman School of Music, 1995), 139.

² Ibid, 140.

interacted with Joseph Schwantner.³ Wilson currently serves as the Charles A. Dana Professor of Music at the School of Music at Ithaca College where he teaches Music Theory, Music History, and Composition.

Wilson has written many well respected works of high technical demand for wind ensemble instrumentation. His *Piece of Mind* (1987) was awarded the Sudler International Composition Prize and the American Bandmasters Association Ostwald Award. Some of his other well known compositions for wind ensemble include *Shakaka: Singing the World into Existence* (1989), *Shortcut Home* (1998), and *Vortex* (1999).

Colorado Peaks was commissioned in 2005 by the St. Vrain Valley Honor Band, out of Longmont Colorado. In the score, Wilson includes the following program note:

Because the piece was commissioned by an ensemble in Colorado, I wanted the piece to make some reference to the awe-inspiring Colorado Rockies. The work is not, however, a depiction of their majesty. Instead it suggests a person's relation to them via a rugged and persistent climb.⁴

In a 1995 interview, Wilson says of his compositional process:

Beginning a piece, however, varies considerably from work to work: sometimes a strong idea motivates the gestures and creates the structure; sometimes I want to write a piece that lives in a certain world and then go about creating shapes that help to create that world...⁵

As Wilson states in his note, he makes an overt reference to the Colorado Rockies, an “idea [that] motivates the gestures and creates the structure...”⁶ Through his compositional language he creates a musical representation of, “a persistent climb.”

Colorado Peaks was composed after ...*the harder they fall*, Wilson’s work for wind ensemble and narrator, and immediately prior to his larger work *To Set the*

³ Ibid, 141.

⁴ Dana Wilson, *Colorado Peaks* (Milwaukee, WI: Boosey & Hawkes, 2009): 2.

⁵ Ferrari, 144.

⁶ Ibid.

Darkness Echoing, dedicated to the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King. Many compositional ideas and devices Wilson employs in *Colorado Peaks* are evident in several of his other compositions, but there are some specific similarities with other wind pieces he composed during this time period.

Colorado Peaks is characteristic of Dana Wilson's writing for band, and is scored in such a way to make it accessible to a wide range of ensembles with potentially limited instrumentation. Wilson wrote the piece for "large wind ensemble," with optional parts for oboe and bassoon, which are cross-scored in other parts of the ensemble. Because this piece is intended for younger band, it is likely that Wilson included cross-cues to provide optional support to the more difficult horn lines. Both of these decisions by Wilson allow the piece to be performed by smaller and/or less experienced ensembles, which may be lacking the full instrumentation.

One example of this cross-scoring occurs in mm. 33–39. An exposed melody is scored in unison between the first trombone and the optional bassoon. In the event that an ensemble is without a bassoon, this cross-scoring allows the melodic integrity of the piece to remain intact (Figure 1).

The image shows a musical score for two staves: Bassoon (top) and Trombone (bottom). Both staves are in 4/4 time and contain a melodic line with various dynamics and articulations. The Bassoon staff starts at measure 33 and the Trombone staff starts at measure 32. Both staves have a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking at the beginning of their respective staves. The Trombone staff has a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking at measure 37. Both staves have a *p* (piano) dynamic marking at the end of the excerpt. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and slurs.

Figure 1. Bassoon and Trombone cross-scoring, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 33–39.

Another example of this flexibility occurs in mm. 73–75. The optional oboe part has a prominent solo, which would detract from the overall integrity of the piece were it not included in the performance. To achieve a complete performance in a situation with limited instrumentation, cues are provided in the first alto saxophone part (Figure 2).

The image shows a musical score for measures 73-75. The top staff is for the Oboe, marked 'Solo' and '73'. It features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff is for the Alto Saxophone, marked 'mp' and '73'. It contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, serving as a cue for the oboe solo. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 2. Oboe Solo cross-cues, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 73–75.

The horn parts are often doubled or cued, but they are definitely not optional, as the piece includes passages scored just for the horn section. An early example of this occurs in mm. 29–34, where a repeated eighth note motive that later evolves into a full melodic theme is first introduced in three of the four horn parts (Figure 3).

The image shows a musical score for measures 29-34. The top staff is for Horn in F 1 and 2, marked '29' and '29'. It features a repeated eighth note motive. The bottom staff is for Horn in F 3 and 4, marked '3' and '4'. It also features the same repeated eighth note motive. The key signature has one flat, and the time signature is 4/4. Dynamics include 'mf' and 'mp'.

Figure 3. Essential non-doubled horn passages, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 29–34.

While the horns are essential to preserve the character of the piece, there are still cross-cues to help support weaker or less experienced performers in technically demanding and exposed passages. One example of this occurs when Wilson writes a solo horn part in mm. 70–71, where he writes trumpet cues with the indication to play with cup mute (Figure 4).

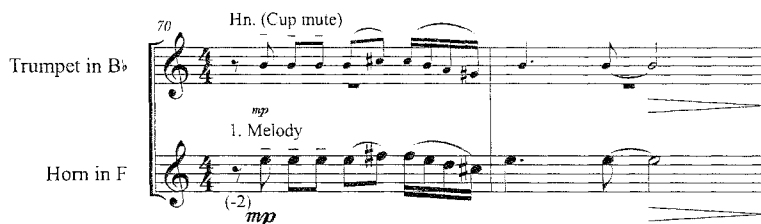


Figure 4. Support cues for horn, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 70–71.

The overall form of this work is ABA, or ternary form. Smaller formal pillars are evident within this form. In the first A section, Wilson employs two primary themes. Theme 1 is first stated by the oboe, first clarinet, and horns in measure 15. Wilson labels this theme with the indication “(Melody),” and it is the first complete statement of Theme 1 (Figure 5).



Figure 5. First statement of melody, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 15–21.

After a brief metered pause marked by single measure of 3/4, a declamatory timpani upbeat figure reminds the listener of the insistent metronomic pulse presented in the opening measures, and the melody previously stated by the horns is restated by the trumpet section.

Wilson harmonizes a melodic line reminiscent of Theme 1 beginning at measure 29 in the upper woodwinds. He has voiced the piccolo and first flute as the fifth in a minor chord. As this line moves, he utilizes chord planing, a technique often employed by Debussy, throughout the entire melodic statement ending in measure 38 (Figure 6 below). Theme 1 is presented once again by trombone 1 and optional bassoon from mm. 33–38 (return to Figure 1 above).

The image displays a musical score for measures 29 through 38 of a piece titled *Colorado Peaks*. The score is written for five woodwind parts: Piccolo, Flute 1, Flute 2-3, Oboe, and Clarinet in B-1. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 3/4. The score illustrates the technique of chord planing, where the intervallic structure of a chord is maintained while the individual notes move in parallel motion across measures. Measure 29 is marked with a '29' in a box. Measure 38 is marked with a '38' in a box. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings like 'dim.' (diminuendo) and 'p' (piano). Below the staves, there are labels for the instruments: Piccolo, Flute 1, Flute 2-3, Oboe, Clarinet in B-1, and Clarinet in B-2-3. At the bottom, there is a list of chords: Gm, Abm, Gm, Abm, Gm, Fm, Fm, Em, Ebm, Dm, Bbm, Dbm, Dm, Dbm, Dm, Dbm, Cm, Gm, Bm, Cm, Bm, Bbm, Bm, Abm, Bbm, Am, Abm, Dm.

Figure 6. Chord planing, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 29–38.

In measure 38, the persistent quarter note ostinato ceases briefly, which is where the vibraphone begins a different rhythmic octave ostinato in measure 38. The quarter note ostinato returns in the bass clarinet after a four measure hiatus, which leads to the presentation of Theme 2. This theme is first stated in the alto and tenor saxophones (Figure 7).

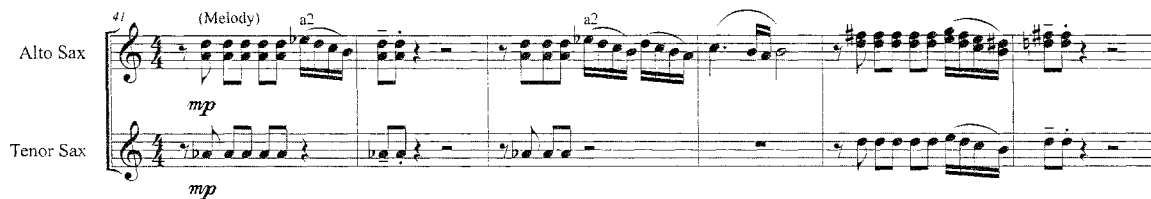


Figure 7. Theme 2 first statement, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 41–46.

At measure 49, clarinet 1 states a fragment of Theme 2, which abruptly ceases and reveals the opening rhythmic and melodic material, essentially Theme 1, creating a ternary form within the larger opening section.

The B section begins at measure 67 where the tempo slows and the texture changes dramatically. The marking is “Tranquil” ($\bullet=96$), and the rhythmic ostinatos have disappeared. Throughout this middle section, fragments of both Theme 1 and 2 are developed. The first statement of Theme 2, marked “Melody” in the B section is stated by horn 1. It is a slightly altered version of the original version of Theme 2 (Figure 8).

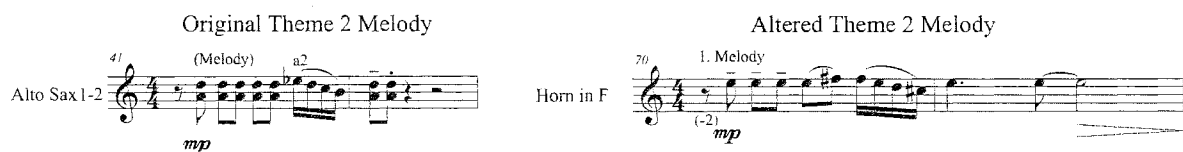


Figure 8. Original and altered Theme 2 melody, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 41–42 and 70–71.

A brief flute cadenza leads the piece back into a return of the A section where the driving quarter note ostinato and fragments of both Themes 1 and 2 are restated. Theme 1

material is set in a rhythmically modified cannon in the trumpets from measures 121–127 (Figure 9).

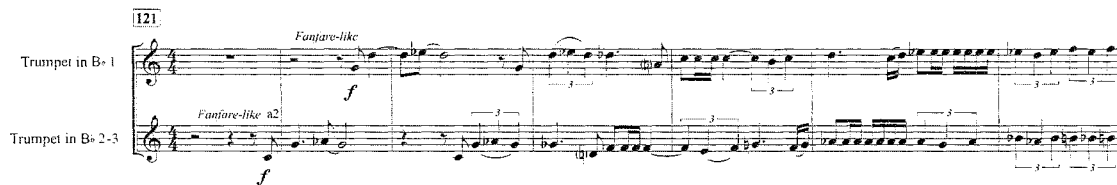


Figure 9. Canonic theme 1 trumpet statement, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 121–127.

Theme I returns one final time at the conclusion of the piece. Wilson employs augmentation in the low brass and woodwinds beginning in measure 137 to double the rhythmic length of this statement. This added rhythmic length allows for sixteenth-note textures in the upper woodwinds which creates a high point and ends the piece with great energy (Figure 10).

137

Bass Clarinet

Baritone Sax

Bassoon
Trombone 3
Baritone (B.C.)

Tuba

143

accel. e cresc. poco a poco

B. Cl.

B. Sax.

Bar.

Tuba

f

ff

ff

ff

ff

Figure 10. Augmented Theme 1 low brass and woodwind statement, *Colorado Peaks*, measures 137–end.

Through flexible orchestration and cueing, Dana Wilson has made *Colorado Peaks* accessible by younger and less experienced ensembles that may lack full instrumentation. Rooted in traditional forms, *Colorado Peaks* reflects Dana Wilson's award winning compositional style, and makes it accessible to musicians of a wide range of ability level. *Colorado Peaks* will challenge and excite young musicians for years to come.

Chapter Two

Commando March by Samuel Barber

Samuel Barber was born on March 9th, 1910 in West Chester Pennsylvania. Barber's aunt and uncle, both professional musicians, took an early interest in developing his musical talents. Barber was composing by age six and was enrolled at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia in 1924 at the age of 14.

While attending Curtis, Barber studied composition and theory with Rosario Scalero, and briefly worked with the conductor Fritz Reiner. His early works completed while attending Curtis include his *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1929) and the overture to *The School for Scandal* (1933), both of which won Columbia University's Joseph H. Bearn's Prize for Composition.⁷

Upon graduating from Curtis, Barber enjoyed further success, winning the American Rome Prize for his 1935 *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano*, op. 6. The Rome prize allowed him to travel to the American Academy in Rome. In addition he was awarded a Pulitzer traveling scholarship, which enabled him to travel and compose throughout Europe.⁸

When pre-World War II tensions began to rise, Barber returned to the United States and accepted a teaching position at the Curtis Institute of Music in 1939.⁹ After the U.S. entered World War II, Barber was conscripted into the United States Army Air

⁷ Russell Anderson Collinsworth, "A Critical Edition Full Score of Samuel Barber's *Commando March*" (DMA Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2008), 1

⁸ Ibid, 3.

⁹ Barbara B Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 204.

Force in September of 1942. The demand of military service significantly slowed his compositional output during this time.

When Barber was discharged from military service in 1945, he was in high demand. He was involved in many prominent commissions, including one for Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. He studied conducting with Nikolai Malko, which allowed him to conduct his own works in recording sessions and live performances. In 1958, he won a Pulitzer Prize in music for his opera *Vanessa*, and he garnered an additional prize in 1962 for his *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 38*. Barber passed away January 23rd, 1981 in New York City.

Samuel Barber was a member of the United States Army Air Force during the height of World War II. His recent success and growing public interest, coupled with the turmoil of the war and his status as a member of the armed forces, created a demand for him to compose war music. A letter to his poet friend Katherine Garrison Chapin, on Nov 14, 1942, two months after he began his military service, confirms this.¹⁰ *Commando March* was completed in response to these requests in February of 1943 and is the only published original work Barber composed for wind band.

More familiar with orchestral instrumentation, Barber voiced frustration over composing for band instrumentation. After completing *Commando March* in February 1943, Barber wrote to conductor William Strickland:

I've finished a march for band and think I shall ask Thor Johnson to try it out for me. I wonder how his band is. It must be played in this Service Command first. It was a nuisance to score—millions of euphoniums, alto clarinets and D-flat piccolos to encumber my score page.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid, 213.

¹¹ Ibid.

Barber includes an additional trombone part, one more than is usually seen in band compositions at the time. In his manuscript score, he includes notes next to the third trombone part at measure 27 (Figure 11). Russell Anderson Collinsworth addresses this issue by preserving the original octave, and also including optional cues an octave higher and marking “Small notes opt.” (Figure 12).

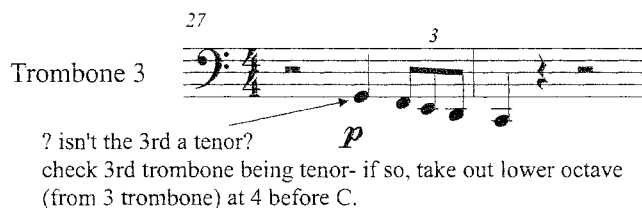


Figure 11. Barber's note on *Commando March* manuscript score regarding Trombone 3, measures 27-28.¹²

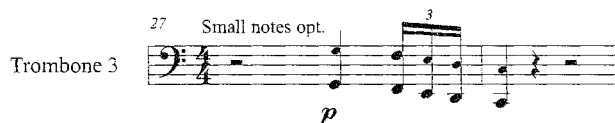


Figure 12. *Commando March*, Collinsworth edition optional upper octave.

Barber noted in his letter to Strickland that before the march could be performed in public by civilian ensembles, a premiere must be made by a service band. *Commando March* was premiered on May 21, 1943 by the Army Air Force Technical Training Command in Atlantic City, NJ. It saw widespread success after its initial premiere. In that summer it was performed several times and recorded for the Office of War Information by the professional civilian Goldman Band. Demand for an orchestral version was high

¹² Collinsworth, 21.

and after Serge Koussevitzky requested an orchestral arrangement, Barber completed it in August of 1943. Koussevitzky's Boston Symphony Orchestra premiered the arrangement on October 29th, 1943 to a live and radio broadcast audience.

Barber's orchestral arrangement is a measure for measure transcription of the 113 measure band orchestration. He adds some sixteenth and thirty-second-note flourishes in the strings that compliment the existing woodwind lines, but preserves the integrity of the overall composition.

On hearing this performance over the radio, Barber quickly wrote to the concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra with two corrections:

If you play the little march again, I have a couple of changes to suggest and ask you to be so kind as to tell the players and Dr. K. They are very small:

1. When the five trumpets come in, in the measure just before the recapitulation, they play flutter tongue on a written "c"—I don't like this and would prefer the following (no double tonguing)



2. on the last note of the trombones' glissando, both times, please add a sf for the bass-drum. . . . Many thanks for bothering with this.¹³

Commando March is composed in a ternary ABA' form with an introduction and coda. The introduction begins with a militaristic rudimentary snare drum drag and triplet that foreshadows the prominent triplet usage throughout the rest of the piece (Figure 13).

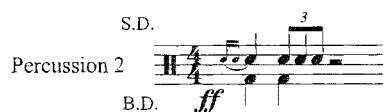


Figure 13. *Commando March*, measure 1 snare figure.

¹³ Heyman, 215.

Woodwinds enter in the first bar with an angular melodic fragment that is punctuated by the lower reeds and saxophones executing a triplet based rhythm. The full ensemble participates in a descending syncopated figure that ends abruptly in measure 7, exposing the percussion soli which states the same triplet motive heard in the first measure.

The first A section begins in measure 12 with the march theme. This theme is passed between sections. It is first presented in the clarinets and bass clarinet, then moves to bass clarinet and bassoon, followed by euphonium, and the sequence is completed by euphonium and oboe (Figure 14). This march theme can be subdivided into smaller sections with a similar aba form. The last “a” section begins in measure 34 with the full woodwind ensemble (minus piccolo, tenor and baritone saxophone) stating the theme in two octaves. A modulation occurs between measures 43–52. Cornets and trombone 1 are set in a fanfare like quartet passing back and forth a triplet and quarter note rhythmic figure. This builds into measure 47 where the low brass, reeds and string bass state a fragment of the march theme (Figure 15).



Figure 14. March theme, *Commando March*.

The image displays a page from a musical score, specifically measures 43 through 50 of the piece 'Commando March'. The score is arranged for a large orchestra, with staves for various instruments listed on the left: Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in B-flat, Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Tenor Sax, Baritone Sax, Cornet (two staves), Horn in F, Trombone 123, Bass Trombone/Euphonium/Tuba, Str. Bass, Timpani, Percussion 2, and Percussion 3. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes a variety of notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *f*, *ff*, *sfz*, and *sf*. The score shows a triplet fanfare and a march theme. The page number 17 is visible in the top right corner.

Figure 15. Triplet fanfare and march theme, *Commando March*, measures 43–50.

The B section begins at measure 53. Piccolo, flute, oboe, and cornets present a tutti statement of the triplet theme punctuated by trombone glissandi and a *sforzando* bass drum strike (Figure 16).

The image displays a musical score for measures 52-56 of the *Commando March*. The score is written for a large ensemble, including Piccolo, Flute 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet in E, Clarinet in B, Clarinet in B, Alto Clarinet, Cornet 1, Cornet 2 & 3, Trombone 1 & 2, Trombone 3, Percussion 2, and Percussion 3. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 2/4. The score features a prominent triplet motive, marked with a '3' and a bracket, which is played by the Piccolo, Flute 1 & 2, Oboe 1 & 2, Clarinet in E, Clarinet in B, Clarinet in B, Alto Clarinet, Cornet 1, Cornet 2 & 3, Trombone 1 & 2, Trombone 3, Percussion 2, and Percussion 3. The Piccolo part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' (march) instruction. The Flute 1 & 2 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Oboe 1 & 2 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Clarinet in E part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Clarinet in B part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Alto Clarinet part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Cornet 1 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Cornet 2 & 3 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Trombone 1 & 2 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Trombone 3 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Percussion 2 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The Percussion 3 part is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic and a 'marc.' instruction. The score also includes a 'Triplet' marking and a 'Bass Drum' marking. The measure numbers 52, 53, 54, 55, and 56 are indicated at the top of the staves.

Figure 16. Triplet motive, *Commando March*, measures 52–56.

Barber develops this triplet theme through rhythmic displacement and syncopations. This short development section transitions into the recapitulation at measure 75.

Cornets begin the statement of the march theme at 75, while the rhythmic triplet theme stated in the B section is restated by horns and trombones. This represents a simultaneous recapitulation of both the A and the B themes (Figure 17). The march theme remains in the cornets during the recapitulation, but the rhythmic triplet theme is

passed around the ensemble, which builds intensity and increased energy throughout this section.

The musical score for measures 75-79 of *Commando March* is written for a wind ensemble. It includes parts for Cornet 1, Cornet 2 & 3, Horn in F 1 & 2, Horn in F 3 & 4, Trombone 1 & 2, and Trombone. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or E-flat minor). The time signature is 2/4. The score begins at measure 75, marked with a 'J' in a box. The music features a strong rhythmic unison of triplet eighth notes in the lower brass and woodwinds, while the cornets play a melodic line. Dynamics include fortissimo (ff) and accents (>).

Figure 17. Simultaneous Recapitulation, *Commando March*, measures 75–79.

The march theme concludes at measure 106 and the trombones and horns state the triplet theme in a call and response gesture reminiscent of the transition from the A to the B section in measures 43–46. This triplet motive ascends in register and builds intensity before Barber employs a full ensemble rhythmic unison of the familiar triplet motive followed by a sustained tonic E-flat to conclude the work.

Commando March is an early example of a well respected orchestral composer writing for the wind band. The concept of a wind ensemble did not exist at the time of its

composition, and Barber treats the band as a large symphonic ensemble. This piece is rooted in history as it was performed numerous times during World War II. It is the only piece bands have in their repertoire from this Pulitzer Prize winning composer, and is a treasure of band literature.

Chapter Three

Blessed Are They by Johannes Brahms,

Arranged by Barbara Buehlman

Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany on May 7, 1833. His father was a musician and provided him his first musical training on the piano. Brahms was a virtuoso at a young age, and quickly began earning money by performing in dance halls and other establishments.¹⁴ He began touring in his late teens and on one of these tours he met Robert and Clara Schumann. They were impressed with his talents, and after Robert published a complimentary article in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Brahms became well-known in musical circles as a young composer.¹⁵

Brahms was notorious for being extremely self critical of his compositions. Because of his self-scrutiny, Brahms lost or destroyed several of his early works because he did not believe them to be of high quality.¹⁶ Not one to rush to complete a work, Brahms would sometimes take many years to carry a composition from conception to public performance. This was the case with his *German Requiem*. Having become a close friend of Clara and Robert Schumann, he was greatly upset by Robert's suicide attempt in 1854. Brahms began writing the second movement of the *German Requiem* partially in response to this event. He later completed more of the work following his mother's death in January of 1865. The first movement was completed by the performance on Good Friday, April 10th, 1868, at the Bremen Cathedral. Brahms added an additional fifth

¹⁴ George S. Bozarth, "Brahms, Johannes," in *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Accessed March 1, 2015.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51879pg1>.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

movement, and the complete work was first performed in February, 1869 in Leipzig.¹⁷

Blessed Are They, Barbara Buehlman's arrangement of the first movement of Brahms's *German Requiem*, Op. 45, is a well constructed treatment of this work, as it conveys much of the original composition through band instrumentation.

Brahms's *German Requiem* was revolutionary at the time it was written.

Historically, requiems had been written based on the latin *Missa pro defunctis* which is rooted in the Roman Catholic church. Brahms instead utilized texts found in the Lutheran bible, in his native German language. The text for the first movement is drawn from Matthew 5:4 and Psalm 126:5-6 (Figure 18).

Text	Translation
Selig sind, die da Leid tragen, denn sie sollen getröstet werden.	Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4
Die mit Tränen säen, werden mit Freuden ernten.	They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.
Sie gehen hin und weinen und tragen edlen Samen, und kommen mit Freuden, und bringen ihre Garben.	He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him. Psalm 126:5-6
Selig sind, die da Leid tragen; denn sie sollen getröstet werden.	Blest are they who bear grief, for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4

Figure 18. Text and translation of first movement of Brahms *German Requiem*.

¹⁷ Daniel Beller-McKenna, "Brahms, the Bible, and post-Romanticism: Cultural issues in Johannes Brahms's later settings of biblical texts, 1877-1896," (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1994), 9-10.

Brahms's original composition is in ABA' form with a coda. The Matthew 5:4 new testament text is set within the A sections, and the Psalm 126:5-6 old testament material is used in the B section exclusively. Buehlman, in her arrangement of this work, has omitted parts of both the B and A' section. This omission eliminates the Psalm 126:6 verse, but preserves the entirety of the Psalm 126:5 verse, which seamlessly links the B section, initial A' statement, and the coda. This omission is addressed further in the conclusion.

With the omission of the Psalm 126:6 area of the B section, Buehlman's arrangement only uses the initial B section material presented in D-flat major. In Brahms's original score, the B section is divided tonally into three areas. The first subsection statement of Psalm 126:5 in measures 47–63 is presented in D-flat Major. The second subsection (measures 65–76) shifts to F Major and restates the introductory material found in measures 1–14. This restatement includes textual accompaniment drawn from Psalm 126:6 in the chorus. The text in this section, "*Sie gehen hin und weinen*" ("He that goeth forth and weepeth"), is the beginning of the Psalm 126:6 text. This text is set over the introductory dotted-quarter, eighth-note motive first played in measure three by the celli, which foreshadows the section which has been omitted in the band arrangement (Figure 19).

The image shows a page of a musical score, likely from a symphony or opera. It features multiple staves for different instruments and vocal soloists. The instruments listed on the left are Flute, Oboe, Horn in F, Trombone, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, Viola, Cello I, Cello II, Contrabass, and Organ. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) include German lyrics. The score is marked with various dynamics such as *p*, *pp*, and *ppp*, and includes performance instructions like *espr.* (espressivo) and *legato*. The page is numbered 165 in the top left corner. The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). The vocal parts are in a soprano, alto, tenor, and bass range. The instrumental parts are for a variety of woodwinds, brass, and strings. The organ part is at the bottom. The lyrics for the vocal parts are: Soprano: Sie ge _ hen hin und wie _; Alto: Sie ge _ hen hin und wie _ nen sic ge _ hen hin und; Tenor: Sie ge _ hen hin und wie _ nen und wie _ nen sie ge _ hen hin und; Bass: Sie ge _ hen hin und wei _ nen. und wei _ nen sie ge _ hen hin und. The organ part has a *pp* marking. The string parts (Viola, Cello I, Cello II, Contrabass) have *pp* and *pp legato* markings. The woodwind parts (Flute, Oboe, Horn in F, Trombone) have *pp* and *ppp* markings. The brass parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) have *p* and *pp* markings. The organ part has a *pp* marking. The page is numbered 165 in the top left corner.

Figure 19. Original choral arrangement Psalm 126:6 text with introductory material, *German Requiem*, measures 65-73.

The introductory instrumental material in measures 1–15 is recalled in the original B section, measures 65–79, with a choral statement of the first phrase of Psalm 126:6. It appears again in D-flat in measures 96-105, with interjections of the initial “*Selig sind*” melodic theme. This opening fourteen measure phrase begins with an instrumental statement of an F-pedal in octaves, but quickly introduces a whole step dissonance in the

second measure, which implies a dominant seventh. This implied dominant seventh resolves to a subdominant B-flat major in the third measure (Figure 20).

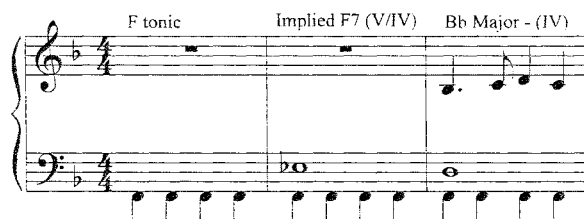


Figure 20. *Blessed Are They*, reduction of measures 1-3.

In both arrangements, the first choral entrance of melody — either choral or instrumental — occurs in measure 15. The words “*Selig sind*” (“Blessed are they”) are set over a three note ascending F, A, B-flat major third and half-step motive. This motive begins in the tonic key of F, and briefly tonicizes the subdominant, metaphorically ascending away from tonic (Figure 21). This rising motive and shift from tonic to subdominant reflects an ascension toward the subdominant via text painting. The implied subjects of the text “Blessed are they” are mourners, those who are actively grieving. This is a shift from the focus of the Latin *Missa pro defunctis*, which begins with text related to the dead — “*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*,” (“Give them eternal rest, O Lord”).

The image shows a musical score for four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The score is in 4/4 time and begins at measure 15. The lyrics are "Se — lig sind." and the dynamic is marked *p* (piano). The Soprano part starts on a whole note, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The Alto part starts on a whole note, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The Tenor part starts on a whole note, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The Bass part starts on a whole note, followed by a half note and a quarter note. The lyrics are "Se — lig sind." and the dynamic is marked *p* (piano).

Figure 21. *German Requiem*, F, A, B-flat motive.

After the first “*Selig sind*” statement, the dotted-quarter, eighth note motive arrives at the tonic key in measures 17–18 to prepare for a second statement of the F, A, B-flat “*Selig sind*” motive in measure 19 (Figure 22).

Figure 22 shows a musical score for measures 15-20 of the German Requiem. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) enter with a dotted quarter - eighth note motive. The instrumental parts (Viola, Cello I, Cello II, Contrabass) follow with a similar motive. The score includes lyrics in German and dynamic markings like *p*, *pp*, and *espr.*.

Vocal Parts:

- Soprano:** *p* Se — lig sind. *espr.* Se — lig — sind, die da
- Alto:** *p* Se — lig sind. *espr.* Se — lig — sind, die da
- Tenor:** *p* Se — lig sind. *espr.* Se — lig — sind, die da
- Bass:** *p* Se — lig sind, Se — lig

Instrumental Parts:

- Viola:** *pp*
- Cello I:** *pp*
- Cello II:** *pp*
- Contrabass:** *pp*

Figure 22. Dotted quarter - eighth-note motive linking choral entrances, *German Requiem*, measures 15–20.

Brahms again employs text painting at the start of the B section. In measure 47 the key shifts away from F to D-flat. The text also shifts to Psalm 126:5 “*Die mit Tränen säen*” (“They that sow in tears”). The initial statements of “*Tränen*” (“tears”) in the chorus are set in descending quarter notes, reflective of tears falling (Figure 23).

The image shows a musical score for the German Requiem, measures 47-51. It features four vocal parts: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The Soprano part has a single note on a whole rest, with the lyrics "Die mit". The Alto part has a descending melodic line with the lyrics "Mit Tränen säen, die mit". The Tenor part has a descending melodic line with the lyrics "Die mit Tränen, die mit Tränen, die mit". The Bass part has a descending melodic line with the lyrics "Die mit Tränen, die mit Tränen, die mit". The score is in G-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked "p" (piano). The measure numbers 47, 48, 49, 50, and 51 are indicated at the top of the staves.

Figure 23. Word painting "tears" - *German Requiem*, measures 47-51.

This descending motion also outlines the harmonic shift to D-flat. Both this shift from F to D-flat coupled with the text's focus on "sowing" and "reaping" set up a dialectic between the earlier heavenly actions of mourning and the earthly weeping, sowing, and reaping. F Major represents the more heavenly act of mourning and blessing ("Blessed are they that mourn"), and D-flat Major reflects the more earth based actions of weeping, sowing, and ultimately reaping joy. Though the arrangement lacks the full extended B section and Psalm 126:6 material, the piece makes a transition between these two key centers and ultimately ends as the original does in the key of F major.

Barbara Buehlman's arrangement brings one of Johannes Brahms's historically significant pieces to the concert band repertoire. Even with the aforementioned omissions, the character of the pieces is preserved and conveyed in a manner that allows this first movement of the larger work to function as a single concert work. Buehlman's *Blessed Are They* has been performed multiple times since its publication and is a core asset of the concert band repertoire.

Chapter Four

Spoon River by Percy Grainger,

Arranged by Glenn Cliffe Bainum

Percy Grainger was born on July 8, 1882. His early childhood years were spent in Melbourne, Australia. His education was provided primarily by his mother, Rose, who supported his interest in the arts and music. As his talents grew as a pianist, community members became aware of his skills, and organized a recital of which the proceeds would benefit Rose and Percy and allow them to travel to Germany. On May 14, 1895, months before Percy was to turn thirteen, this recital took place, and allowed for their departure from Australia on May 29, 1895.¹⁸

Grainger studied at the Hoch Conservatory from 1895 – 1901. After this time he moved to London. During his tenure in London, Grainger transcribed and arranged many native English folk songs. He was one of the first composers to utilize phonograph recordings to collect these folk songs, many of which later made their way into his arrangements and compositions.

On the advent of the first World War, Grainger relocated to the United States. His reputation as both a pianist and composer grew during these years, and he eventually joined the U.S. Army where he played the oboe, and eventually soprano saxophone. He continued to work as a composer and ethnomusicologist, traveling and collecting folk songs. He eventually resumed his solo piano career and continued to lecture and work as an educator and performer until his failing health prevented him from working. Percy

¹⁸ John Bird, *Percy Grainger*. (Tetford Norfolk: Thetford Press, 1972), 24.

Grainger died on February 20, 1961 at the age of 78, after a long and influential career as composer and purveyor of early folk music.

Spoon River, in its original form, was a fiddle tune that was sent to Grainger by the American poet Edgar Lee Masters. Grainger includes Masters' note in the published versions of his setting (Figure 24):

The fiddle tune below was sent me by Capt. Charles H. Robinson in the summer of 1915, at my request, after he had written me in regard to *Spoon River Anthology* that he had heard the old fiddlers play this tune when he lived in Stark County, Illinois, in 1857.

"Spoon River"

Fiddle-tune

as heard in 1857 at a dance at Bradford, Illinois, U.S.A.,

by Capt. Charles H. Robinson

End

2nd time octave higher

1st time 2nd time

Back to start

Figure 24. Edgar Lee Masters' note to Percy Grainger.

Grainger originally set *Spoon River* for solo piano in March of 1919. This setting was greatly expanded in Grainger's 1929 orchestral setting. In a preface to the orchestral edition of *Spoon River* dated December 2, 1929, Grainger included an essay titled *To Conductors and to Those Forming, or in Charge of Amateur Orchestras, High School, College and Music School Orchestras and Chamber-Music Bodies*. In this essay he presented his ideas as they relate to his conception of "elastic scoring."

In the essay, Grainger emphasized that his music tells its story mainly by means of *intervals* rather than tone color, so any combination of instruments can be used on a performance so long as proper balance of tone is kept.¹⁹ He further suggested that orchestral conductors experiment with new instruments such as the harmonium, saxophone, and "tuneful percussion," instruments unavailable to orchestral composers of the past when the instrumentation of the ensemble was set. Through this elastic scoring concept, Glenn Cliffe Bainum realized a concert band arrangement that preserves tonal balance as Grainger intended, while replacing orchestral string parts with concert band analogues.

Glenn Cliffe Bainum's arrangement is based upon Grainger's 1929 elastically scored orchestral version of the setting. The introduction begins with a rhythmic octave pedal ostinato that sets the tempo of the piece. The optional piano (cross cued for winds in its absence) recalls three chords found later in measures 37-39, extending measure 5 in a 3/2 measure (Figure 25). The first statement of the fiddle tune theme (see Figure 24 above) occurs in measure 6. The theme is passed between bass clarinet and alto, tenor,

¹⁹ Ibid., 285.

and baritone saxophones, while the rhythmic octave pedal ostinato continues in the low woodwinds.

Allegro non troppo

Piano

Clarinet 3, 4
Bassoon 1, 2
Marimba 1, 2
(In octaves)

pp

p

Figure 25. Ostinato and piano chords, *Spoon River*, measures 1–5.

In Measure 22, the fiddle theme is played by clarinet 1 and 2, and is reinforced in measure 30 by oboe, English horn and clarinet 3 and 4. The rhythmic octave pedal ostinato remains in the pitched “tuneful” percussion, but is now also stated by flutes, alto and bass clarinet and alto saxophone. The first half of the melody this time is punctuated saxophones, bassoon and muted horn and trombone in measures 24–25 and 28, sounding an accented E-flat major triad over the concert pitch G in the clarinet melody. The melody is harmonized by those same voices leading to the second half in measure 30. Here both the ostinato and melody intensify, adding more instruments in unison.

A significant contrast occurs as the texture of the ensemble thins to a small chamber group of solo piccolo and flute, accompanied by either harp or piano playing arpeggiated chords through the full melodic statement (Figure 26).

This musical score shows measures 56 through 61 of the piece *Spoon River*. It features three staves: Piccolo, Flute, and Harp (optional). The Piccolo part begins at measure 56 with a 'Solo' marking and a *mf* dynamic. The Flute part also begins at measure 56 with a 'Solo' marking and a *p* dynamic. The Harp part begins at measure 56 with a *p* dynamic. The music is in 3/8 time and consists of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Figure 26. Chamber Piccolo, Flute and Harp texture, *Spoon River*, measures 56–61.

The texture of the piece changes again at measure 72. The first half of the fiddle theme is stated by clarinets, while a new legato counter melody based on a dotted half note and four quarter notes is introduced in flutes and oboe. At the conclusion of the statement of the first half of the fiddle theme in measure 80, the counter melody becomes the prominent focus of measures 80–96. This new counter melody is inverted and set over a variation of the same eight measure fragment of the fiddle theme heard in measures 72–80 (Figure 27).

This figure shows two musical staves. The first staff, labeled 'Flute / Oboe', shows measures 72 and 80. The melody is marked with a *p* dynamic and is labeled 'Counter melody'. The second staff shows measures 80 and 81. The melody is marked with a *mf* dynamic and is labeled 'Inverted Counter melody'. The music is in 3/8 time and consists of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Figure 27. Countermelody and Inversion, *Spoon River*.

This section marks the first area where the fiddle theme has not been fully stated. Grainger also alters the transposition and intervallic structure of the fiddle theme to compliment the new counter melody (Figure 28). In measures 104–112 the legato counter melody clearly takes a dominant role in the texture. In this section the

countermelody is orchestrated for more resonant instruments and is given more prominence through dynamic contrast from the other material. This shift continues through measure 120. At this point the fiddle theme ceases completely and the legato countermelody diminishes in dynamic intensity and descends from high cornet tessitura to measure 128.

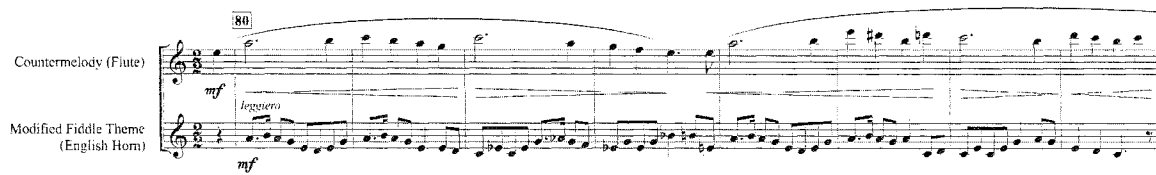


Figure 28. Countermelody and modified fiddle theme, *Spoon River*, measures 80–87.

In measures 128–144 the texture thins significantly and the three main elements seen in the piece return. The introductory quarter-note ostinato is harmonized in the piano, harp, and marimbas. The fragment of the first half of the main fiddle theme is performed solely by the xylophone, this time transposed up a minor third. The upper woodwinds and horn state the legato countermelody. At measure 136 the previous eight measure phrase is restated, transposed up a whole step, and voices are added to the countermelody. The density of the orchestration increases in measures 142–143, building to a fortissimo restatement of the second half of the main fiddle theme in measure 144.

The restatement of the second half of the original fiddle theme begins in measure 144, and is the first presentation of this part of the theme since the flute, piccolo and harp chamber section in measure 64. It is passed to different instruments every two measures, as seen in the opening first statement. The theme is accompanied by heavy and boisterous quarter note ostinato on beats 2 and 4 in the lower woodwinds and brass. This builds into

the final full statement of the fiddle theme which begins at measure 152, and gives way to an energetic coda to conclude the piece.

Spoon River is an excellent example of Percy Grainger's ability to re-invent folk songs. He weaves a new unique countermelody over an American folk song, creating lush melodies and textures that can now be appreciated by members of a concert band through Glenn Cliffe Bainum's arrangement.

Conclusion/Areas of Further Study

Prior to my graduate studies, my level of research into a piece of music I would program for my younger middle school ensembles was cursory at best. The extent of most of my preparation was studying the notes and rhythms on the page, and practicing tempo and meter changes. Now, at this point in my professional development, I would (and in fact do) feel guilty about preparing so little. In researching each of these pieces, I have found there are countless avenues of further study.

Dana Wilson's body of work has greatly intrigued me. His jazz and popular music influences in his formative years seem to have made their way into his compositions in interesting ways. Studying more of his work from various periods could show how his style has changed throughout his career. Much of the perspective I was able find on his writing style came from interviews that are now twenty years in the past. As a composer, I am sure Dr. Wilson's style has evolved since the early to mid 1990s. An interview with him discussing how he feels his style has evolved and changed would easily shed light on this.

A great deal of research has been completed by R. Anderson Collinsworth on Samuel Barber's *Commando March*. His critical edition score has been well researched and the accompanying research paper has uncovered many previously unclear aspects of the composition. One interesting avenue of further research would be studying and comparing his band orchestration in *Commando March* with his *Funeral March* – his unpublished composition for wind band. The Library of Congress has a holding of the original manuscript, and it would be illustrative to study this work.

In researching Brahms's *German Requiem*, I have seen a wide breadth of research relating to his use of text and text painting. One interesting aspect of Buehlman's treatment is that it does not include any of the Psalm 126:6 text sections. One may assume reasons for this may include editing for brevity, or possibly the tonality of those sections may have caused more difficult technical demands on the performer. Unfortunately, Barbara Buehlman passed away in 1997. It would be interesting to explore in depth how she treated the orchestrational challenges of combining both orchestral and choral voices into a well-balanced arrangement. This would be a great area of study for anyone wishing to create a similarly orchestrated arrangement from mixed choral/orchestral source material.

While I was able study the four-hands version of Grainger's *Spoon River*, I was unable to obtain a full score of the orchestral edition upon which it is based. My research has indicated that Dr. William Carson very recently discovered original manuscript parts intended for performance by the Goldman Band in 1933. It would be very interesting to compare the arrangements of the version Grainger orchestrated for concert band with Glenn Cliffe Bainum's version for concert band. It follows the same form and is essentially a transcription of the aforementioned orchestral version. On a cursory listening comparison it is easy to notice several orchestrational differences between the two.

Ultimately every composition discussed in this document can be explored further. It is my hope that the information I have presented highlights the salient features of each work. In studying and presenting these four compositions, I have found a great depth of knowledge, and a desire to study, discover, and explore further.

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